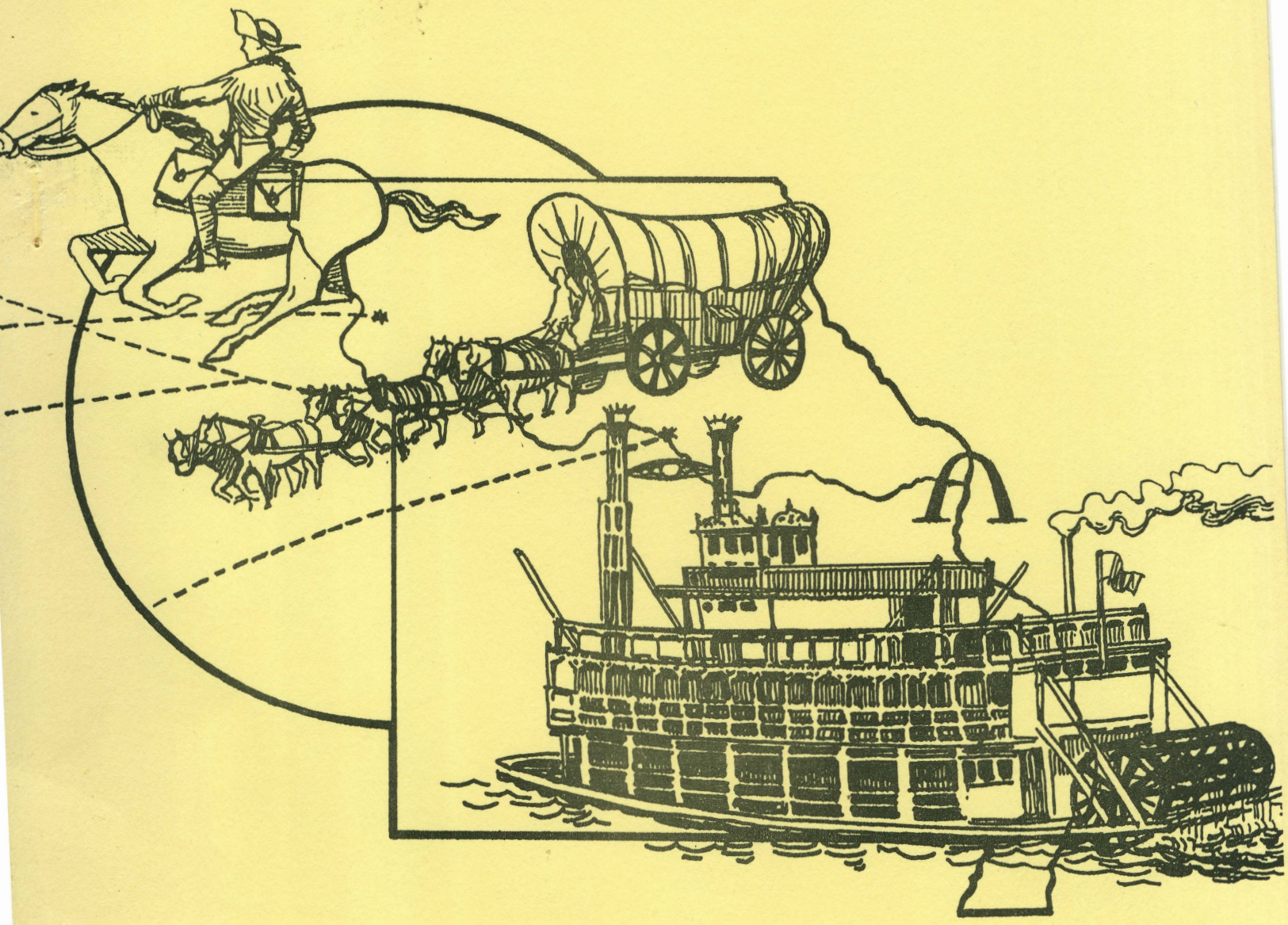
Spring, 1986



Toward the Setting Sun

TOWARD THE SETTING SUN

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From the Editor:

This issue of Toward the Setting Sun includes examples of two basic kinds of historical writing. The first article, by MaryEllen McVicker, is a scholarly treatment of church architecture in Missouri. It is carefully researched and documented. In its original form, it was presented at a faculty forum at Central Methodist College, as a part of the observance of the Bicentennial of American Methodism. It was illustrated by slides of the churches described. Ms. McVicker was, at that time, a part of the faculty of Central Methodist College and the curator of Stephens Museum. She is an active member of the Missouri West Commission on Archives and History.

The article by A.E. Hammond is an example of the writing down of oral traditions circulating in a community. This is all primary material, taken from church records and from the storehouse of memories of members of the Golden Chapel congregation. It is the kind of historical writing we would encourage in every church in the connection. Note the emphasis on persons----on the events which make life and memory so rich. Formal histories lack the immediacy and humanity of the oral traditions, with stories about church football teams, seining mishaps, and interrupted choir practices. Mr. Hammond is a member of Wesley United Methodist Church in Trenton, has held nearly every office in the local church, and served on the West Conference Council on Finance and Administration.

A suggestion for those who like to combine short trips with a deeper understanding of their heritage. You might find a trip to see some of the churches Ms. McVicker describes to be a delightful weekend experience. Many of them are located in central Missouri, only a short drive from Columbia. The oldest church in Missouri (still standing) is Old McKendree Chapel, near Jackson in southeast Missouri. It is less central, but well worth the trip.

We continue to encourage you to write for Toward the Setting Sun. We would be happy to offer a list of suggested topics, if you want to write, but aren't sure where to begin. We would also be pleased to offer editorial advise for your manuscript as you begin to develop it. Drop us a note at

500 Tuxedo
Webster Groves, Mo. 63119.

It is always a pleasure to hear from United Methodists who are interested in preserving and sharing our heritage.

John O. Gooch

MISSOURI'S METHODIST CHURCHES

Maryellen H. McVicker

History of Methodist Churches in General

When I told a family member (who shall remain anonymous) that I was going to present a forum on the history of Methodist churches, this member looked at me and said, "Why would you want to do that? Everyone knows that when you drive to a town you look for the most conservative church, the one with all the stained glass and massive walls and if that isn't the Methodist church now, it once was". Even given the bias of the maker, that statement has some ring of truth in it. Methodist churches, at least historical Methodist churches, follow the most conservative trends of ecclesiastical architecture and con sciously strive for moderation with nothing in excess.

The church edifice is a building distinct from all other structures in a community. Books written to explain how to construct and finance new churches emphasize the importance of the structure as "A rendezvous of man with God--the visible re-presentation of the dwelling of God with humanity". [1]

Churches have been built in the United States from the time of the earliest settlements. Captain John Smith described the first church in the colony of Virginia as "a homely thing like a barn covered with rafts, sedge, and earth. Yet we had

daily common prayer morning and evening, and every three months holy communion."[2] In the beginning, churches were meeting-houses as well as places of worship, but as the colonies prospered, more pretentious structures were erected, often conforming to English traditions, especially in the South. As many of the Methodists who built early churches in Missouri were Southern in outlook, this distinction assumes additional importance. During the eighteenth century the influence of Sir Christopher Wren and of the Renaissance was strong, with churches featuring Palladian windows. An excellent example of Wren architecture in Missouri is the Church of St. Mary Aldermanbury's, more commonly known as the Churchill Memorial, on the campus of Westminster College in Fulton. Certainly as the settlers headed west they built structures reminiscent of those "back home" as soon as practical.

According to Elbert M. Conover, director of the Bureau of Architecture of the Methodist Episcopal Church during the first half of this century, early American churches labored under great handicaps as they strove to actually construct buildings. The congregations were great distances from good examples of Christian architecture; when certain motifs were desired for the churches, there were often no craftsmen who could actually carve or build the desired object; the rapidly changing conditions of frontier life made buildings and entire towns obsolete overnight. An excellent example of this is the now destroyed

town of Franklin in Howard County which washed into the Missouri River. There was also apathy toward the symbols of worship and a strong emphasis upon meetings and revivals with controversial preaching rather than the traditional means of worship. This made traditional architecture seem unnecessary or even alien. [3]

The stabilizing of frontier conditions permitted the use of the Gothic Revival and Greek Revival styles but the Civil War brought an interruption to church architecture which lasted until H.H. Richardson built Trinity Church in Boston.[4] Conover lamented the death of excellent church architecture in the twentieth century and longed for a return to the "good old days" of the Gothic Revival. As he was influential when many of the traditional Methodist Churches were built across the country, his influence on the creation of "those conservative churches with stained glass" mentioned earlier was important.

James F. White, of Perkins School of Theology, points out that the Methodists were one of the first to concentrate on the feelings of the worshiper as the prime focus of their service. He claims that, although one may detect strains of this approach in German Pietism of the late seventeenth century and in the Great Awakening of the eighteenth century, it was not until the early nineteenth century (about the time Missouri was settled), that Revivalism and "getting religion" became popular and revolutionized the shape of American Protestantism. The

emphasis on "getting religion" and the format of the camp meeting to an extent influenced the buildings in which these experiences happened. Worship became a means to an end, the end being conversion of a most dramatic and emotional sort in which the damned passed from sin into the company of the saved.[5] Churches had to be large enough to accommodate not only the crowds of persons waiting to experience salvation, but also the crowds of the curious come to see this conversion.

This approach to worship dates back to the founding of Methodism by the Wesleys. The early Methodists sought to supplement, not supplant, the Church of England faith. Methodist services held during "church hours" were frowned upon and Methodist buildings were referred to as "preaching houses" rather than churches. The intent was clearly to serve as the locale for preaching, but not to replace the parish church as the site for the sacraments. This was reflected in early Methodist churches, where the pulpit was prominent. After 1764 altar tables and rails began to appear in the Methodist buildings in England, although they may not have been used during Wesley's lifetime. The poverty of many of the early Methodists made it impossible to erect even preaching houses, but when funds did permit several types of buildings were built. The most notable of these was the octagon, which was a building type advocated by John Wesley and which was widely adopted on his authority. He believed it had the best possible

acoustics and would allow the construction of galleries in the upper stories on seven sides of the octagon, thus maximizing use of the space. However, this type of building never became popular with American Methodists.

Rectangular buildings eventually replaced the octagon in England. These had galleries on the two long sides of the church and a pulpit, reading desk, and altar-table enclosed by a rail in the front. The Minutes of the 1780 Conference in England ordered:

> Let all preaching-houses be built plain and decent; but not more expensive than is absolutely unavoidable; otherwise the necessity of raising money will make rich men necessary to us. But if so, we must be dependent upon them, yea, and governed by them. And then farewell to Methodist discipline, if not doctrine too. [6]

Thus decoration and extravagance were guarded against in the early English Methodist preaching-houses. Indeed, when the image of an angel with a trumpet was placed over the pulpit of the Halifax preaching-house, it caused such an uproar that it was removed and burned.[7] The early ministers carrying the faith across the Atlantic to a New World certainly remembered the cautions they had heard at home and combined them with the demands of congregations used to the Established Church here in the colonies.

The Methodist Church was the last of the Protestant denominations to take root in the colonies. Although the Wesleys were briefly in Georgia in the 1730s, and although ten-

tative beginnings occurred throughout the century, the arrival of Francis Asbury in 1771 marked the real impetus for the denomination. Asbury traveled over a quarter of a million miles and preached approximately 165,000 sermons in America. In December of 1784, the Christmas Conference organized the Methodist Episcopal Church and began the long line of Methodist buildings in this country. [8]

History of Methodism in Missouri

The establishment of the Methodist church in Missouri really began in 1806 when John Travis was appointed to travel the Missouri Circuit of the Western Conference. So as not to interfere with other boundary lines, the Western Conference was specifically referenced as to northern, eastern, and southern boundaries, but the western boundary was "all west to the setting sun and all beyond it". [9] After a year Travis was able to report that he had organized two circuits, one north of the Missouri River (Missouri Circuit) and one south (Meramec Circuit). Total membership for both circuits numbered 106 persons. Working with Bishop William McKendree, Travis returned for another year and then was succeeded by Jesse Walker, of whom it was said, "he was never lost and never complained"[10], surely a high compliment to a man traveling about the wilds of Missouri for an annual salary of $64. By 1814, 804 persons had joined the Methodist Church, and by the

time Missouri had been admitted to the Union, 1,543 counted themselves as Methodists. By 1884, the Centennial year of Methodism in the United States, membership in Missouri had leaped to 200,000.

It must be kept in mind that the present United Methodist Church is the result of several mergers and splits throughout the history of the denomination, with the last merger occurring in 1968 to form the present United Methodist denomination. Every branch was represented in Missouri at some point.

Finally, the question of Methodist churches and their architecture is based upon practical financial matters. According to Dr. Greg Poole of the East Conference staff, building a new church was a local matter in the nineteenth century. Rev. Wes Arrington of the West Conference agrees, adding that the local church was responsible for hiring their own architect. Both say that certain architects were probably well known in Methodist circles and had established reputations Poole adds that it was the dream of the founders to build a church every four miles, and they almost succeeded in Missouri. Each church lot was ideally one acre in size. Many of these small churches had to close, of necessity, over the years.[11]

Methodist Churches in Missouri

Now let us turn our attention to actual Methodist church buildings in Missouri. Churches in Missouri followed national

trends in ecclesiastical architecture.

For the sake of convenience, I have divided the historical Methodist churches into four basic categories, based on chronology and influence of the social and political structure of Missouri in its historical development.

1. Early churches, which have mostly been demolished. These structures were often of logs and were a first attempt to establish a place of worship in an environment still being wrested from a wilderness.

2. Ante-bellum churches which were built during the 1840s through the 1870s in a few instances. Certainly the Civil War with all its havoc stopped the construction of most Methodist churches in Missouri and necessitated the re-building of others which were destroyed in the war.

3. The introduction of the Akron plan and the rapidly expanding membership of the church led to a large increase in construction during the period from the 1880s through World War I.

4. The period between World War I and the Great Depression marked the last great revival of historical styles in Missouri Methodist architecture. Churches were constructed in more conservative, pseudo-cathedral patterns, with conscious borrowing of designs from Europe and the East Coast of our own country.

Many communities experienced several or all of these phases. An excellent example is the Methodist church in Boon-

ville, where the earliest of the three churches constructed on the same site was a two-story frame structure with a cupola and at least two main entrances. It was plain with no exterior embellishment. I have been unable to discover what the interior looked like. This building was razed in 1880 to build a larger church to house a growing membership. The second structure was more pretentious. It was of brick in a watered-down version of the High Victorian architecture then popular on the East Coast. It had Gothic Revival windows with a single cupola. Again, I have been unable to determine what the interior looked like, but it was probably a rectangular church plan with parallel rows of pews leading back from the pulpit along a central aisle. Although the church was only 35 years old, it was also demolished in 1915 to construct the present building, Nelson Memorial. The demolition of this church at such a young age speaks to the boosterism of the Boonville community at the time and reflects a national trend toward newer, bigger, and, therefore, better in buildings. Nelson Memorial is an excellent example of the Akron plan and will be discussed fully later. Other examples of this type of construction which immediately come to mind are Columbia, Rocheport, Jefferson City, Fayette, and Centralia in mid-Missouri alone.

1. Log churches The oldest surviving Methodist church in Missouri is McKendree Chapel, today restored to its original

condition. The building measures 30 feet wide by 35 feet in length and is constructed of horizontal faced logs, with clapboarding on the exterior. A fireplace is set in the end opposite the single entrance to the church. Two windows on the side allow light into the interior. The simplicity of the building reflects the early date of construction and must also reflect the typical first Methodist church built in many communities along the major rivers which served as the traffic-ways for Missouri at this time. The building site was the site of a camp meeting in 1806, and of regular camp meetings after 1810. Bishop Wm. McKendree attended one such meeting in 1818, and it was then decided to name the new church for him. Although no architect is known for a building of this type built in the literal wilderness, records show that a Charnal Glasscock was the boss carpenter and was assisted by a James Giboney and a Mr. Shelby.[12] When the Methodist church split in the 1840s over the issue of slavery, a mourner's bench was placed in McKendree Chapel, and people pledged their allegiance to one branch of the church or the other by taking their place on the appropriate bench. Services were discontinued in the church around 1890, although the building was still used occasionally. Today, McKendree Chapel remains as the best example of extremely early church architecture in Missouri. Its simple, functional style continued to be quite commonplace in rural churches throughout the entire nineteenth century, even as the

actual log construction gave way to the more modern balloon framing.

Ante-bellum churches As soon as practical, early Methodists who had financial resources built larger and more elegant churches, abandoning the stern admonitions issued by the English Methodists against such building. Several factors can help explain this desire to build more elaborate edifices. One factor in the sections of the state along the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers was the influx of people from southern states who brought with them their memories of the Georgian churches they had known in Virginia and Kentucky. Certainly, many of the churches built prior to the Civil War have too many similarities to the colonial churches of Virginia, Maryland, and the Carolinas to be merely coincidence. Another factor in the building of more Methodist churches was the influx of Germans into the state. These people brought with them strong Catholic and Lutheran heritages, and, although they might build a Methodist church, it would have elements of the churches they remembered from Germany. Finally, Romanticism with all its attendant emphasis on mystery, the picturesque, and reflection captured the intellectual spirit of the state. Within six months of the appearance of a major work of literature in New York, it could be read in Missouri, a short length of time given the travel conditions of the day. Books on architecture

were also available, and people pored over them to determine in what style to construct their homes and churches in order to show their culture and elegant taste.[13] The headlong rush to instant culture and a bettering of facilities was halted only by the Civil War. Examples from this second period of Methodist church architecture can be found in old photographs, and in buildings still standing and in use.

One of the churches built to reflect this Southern outlook in architecture with classical influences from the coast and the influence of the Greek Revival period was the church in Rocheport (now demolished). At the time of its construction in 1844, Rocheport was a thriving river port with a population of 450 persons.[14] The church was built of brick with two front entrances which may have been used as separate entrances for men and women. This practice can be documented from records of adjoining, rural, Howard County churches built in the 1840s. While no actual proof remains for the Rocheport building, the assumption seems probable.[15] The church sat on a raised platform with the worship area on the second floor. A bell spire and steeple topped the structure, although I was unable to determine if this was original to the building or not. It was definitely in place by 1884.[16] The windows were capped by flat stone lintels and the cornice appears to have been plain, with no bracketing of any kind. The church was demolished in the 1890s to construct the present-day building (which will be

discussed under the Akron plan).

Contemporary in most respects with the Rocheport church is the present-day Methodist church in Glasgow. Organized prior to 1840, according to the county history,[17] the church was built in the late 1840s of common bond red brick and, like the Rocheport church, featured the sanctuary on the second floor over a raised basement, but with a single entrance. Paired Gothic Revival windows fill the sides of the structure and the second story area immediately over the door. The four corners of the church are framed by buttresses which project above the roof line. The church has brick bracketing under the roof and between the first and second stories forming a decorative pattern not seen on the church at Rocheport. The importance and size of the building can be seen by the fact that, during the Civil War,[8] it was used by Federal troops as a headquarters. The interior has been modernized.

The Second Methodist Church of Caledonia, Washington County, was originally built in 1852 from bricks which were burned in the area. It served as a place of worship until it burned in 1909. An old photograph of the building shows a structure similar to the churches at both Rocheport and Glasgow with a double entrance, bell tower, and small spire. Rectangular in plan, with windows immediately above the entrances having flat lintels with no trace of Gothic influence, the church does exhibit a curious stepping effect above the front

entrance which forms a staircase effect of 4 large steps per side, a motif not totally unknown from colonial Virginia.[18]

Much simpler in appearance, although constructed along a similar plan, was the Methodist church of Old Cambridge in Saline County. Built in 1852, it was destroyed in the 1930s by a windstorm. The building was constructed with walnut pegs and a few square nails and featured a slave gallery on the upper level. This leads to the speculation that such a gallery may have existed at the other churches already mentioned, as the windows on the second level are similar and certainly the churches were in the heart of slave-holding Missouri.

Self Chapel Methodist Church in Morgan County was built in 1855 and lacks the slave gallery. It was a much simpler church being a frame construction and was built for a rural congregation. In style it is reminiscent of McKendree Chapel. The building was torn down in 1909 and is today known from a single photograph which says on the back that the entire congregation had a picnic the Sunday before the demolition of the church, and then everybody lined up and had a photograph taken so they would always have a picture of the building. One cannot help but remark that more is seen of the people than of the church itself!

Ante-bellum churches which show the influence of the Gothic Revival include St. Charles Methodist Episcopal Church. LaGrange Methodist Church in Lewis County shows the continued

Greek Revival influence. In 1859, the frame Danville Methodist Church was built. The community also housed the Danville Female Academy, an early Methodist school for women. Here the front entrance is recessed into a portico and a slave gallery seems probable for the second story. Simple in plan, the building reflects the brick elegance of the then year-old church at LaGrange.

Immediately following the Civil War a few churches were built which belong architecturally to the ante-bellum period. One example is the church in Mississippi County built in 1872 which shows strong kinship to the other churches, being of brick on a raised platform, and having a rectangular plan with decorative brick patterning in the entrance end. Smaller and more rural, Thomas Chapel in Washington County was constructed shortly after Rev. John Thomas deeded the land to the church in August 1873.[19] A frame, single-story, building, the church has a single entrance and is rectangular in plan.

Dating from this ante-bellum period are a series of churches traceable to the German influence in the state.

Bethel Methodist Church was constructed in 1867 near Labadie in Franklin County and is a brick building with a single entrance, with flat pilasters framing the entrance as at Glasgow. Rectangular in plan, the church has a bell tower and spire much like the ones at Rocheport and Caledonia. In 1869,

the Evangelical United Brethren Church was built in Glasgow[21] and was later enlarged to include an entrance porch with turret.

Ten years later, in 1879, the Koenig Methodist Church was built in Osage County.[22] With a European flavor to the building with the tall single tower at the entrance topped by a spire, the church seems to belong in the German Rhineland rather than in Missouri. A frame building, the rest of the church looks to have been very simple and plain.

Old Appleton-Zion church in Gordonville (Cape Girardeau County) was built in 1876.[23] The members evidently made the bricks for the building themselves from clay on a nearby hill. The church is 80 feet long and 35 feet wide with a seating capacity of 250. It is rectangular in plan, with a rubble foun dation, semi-circular windows, flat lintels, and a spire and buttress. A single tower entrance gives access to the interior. An old photograph of the interior decorated for Thanksgiving shows a center aisle, and a stove on each side for heating purposes.

In the rural churches of the state, ante-bellum architecture was firmly entrenched and hung on long after it disappeared from the more fashionable town Methodist churches. Examples of this include Locust Grove in Boone County. The congregation was organized in 1818 and this frame church was constructed in 1870.[24] Athens church in Clark County, Hematite

church, Flucom German Methodist, Zion, and Victoria, all in Jefferson County, show that the architecture was characteristic of all the branches of the Methodist church and all areas of Missouri.

The Akron Plan One of the most popular plans for Methodist churches has been the Akron plan. The influence of revivals in the nineteenth century cannot be underestimated as churches began to be built specifically under the influence of the necessity to have room for large crowds, organs to accommodate the music that raised the audience to a fever pitch, a choir to thrill the assemblage, and a pulpit on a platform so everyone could see the preacher. The term "auditorium" came to be actively used to designate the room where worship was conducted. This shift to auditorium from sanctuary indicates the shift in emphasis from liturgy to emotion. The Methodist Church reflected this type of arrangement, particularly after the Civil War.

The Akron Plan originated in Akron, Ohio, and seems to have been the invention of Lewis Miller, who first used it in the First Methodist Episcopal Church there. It was the product of an effort to provide an appropriate setting where Sunday School opening exercises could be held en masse and then separate classes. The plan consists of a hall with a horseshoe gallery in which both the gallery and the ground floor could be divided up as needed by folding partitions. Thus Sunday School

came to have a life all its own, becoming a church within a church.[25] Ever practical, Methodists soon realized that the auditorium/sanctuary could be combined with the Sunday School space, thus saving money. A pulpit platform and organ were accordingly placed in one corner of the building. The choir stall and organ pipes inevitably rose in back of the pulpit proper, with its pulpit chairs. Often the floor sloped toward the pulpit platform. On overflow days, the partitions were opened and worshipers could sit in the Sunday School rooms.

For 50 years, the Akron Plan had a tremendous influence, not only on Methodist church architecture, but on that of other Protestant denominations as well. One enthusiastic writer proclaimed, "Church architecture in America---more especially that of the non-ritual church---has been completely revolutionized by this influence".[26] Books flooded the land telling how to incorporate the plan into new churches and singing the praises of the practicality and educational benefits of such a church. Many of the Methodist churches in Missouri were constructed according to this plan as congregations entered the third category of Methodist historic church construction. A rising standard of living with the Gilded Age brought a sense of boosterism to even small Missouri communities and a growing population squeezed the spaces of many ante-bellum edifices. Finally, the old need to keep up with the Joneses brought new construction, or at least re-modeling to many Methodist

churches.

An excellent example is the saga of St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church in Springfield, Greene County. The first church was a typical ante-bellum church of brick with a Gothic spire on a raised basement of the type described several times previously. In 1885 the church was re-modeled to give it a Victorian flavor with the spire being totally changed to a square tower complete with balustrade and two small turrets at each end of the roof on the entrance side. There was a conscious, obvious, attempt to modernize the structure and to bring it up to date with the then prevailing standards of taste migrating westward from the East Coast. Not being satisfied with the re-modeling the congregation soon after the turn of the century built a new church entirely.

The congregation at Rocheport tore down their earlier church in favor of the Akron plan. Built of red brick with a High Victorian exterior, the church still serves the community. Famous in the church is the Moses U. Payne window. Payne was the first millionaire Methodist minister and gave liberally to Methodist institutions, rescuing one Missouri college from bank ruptcy. In gratitude the school changed the name of the institution to Howard-Payne College for Women. His epitaph reads:

> The close was like the setting of the sun. He left the darkness here; the light of the Eternal Morning was upon his face; gladly he went out with his Pilot into the unending day.[27]

The Akron plan was so strong in the Methodist Church that

competing congregations located in the same town might both feature the same design. A good example of this is the First M.E. Church in Chillicothe and its rival, Elm Street church, both of whom prominently display auditoriums in the Akron plan in their literature.

Henry Hobson Richardson had a great influence upon American church architecture in the 1880s. Missouri followed the rest of the country and often combined the rough, ashlar block, appearance of Richardsonian Romanesque with the Akron plan to form the proverbial conservative "stone church with stained glass" so disdained by the member of my family. An excellent example of this combination is the Methodist church in Jefferson City, built soon after the beginning of the 20th century. A 1906 history of Missouri Methodism gives the cost of this edifice as $30,000.[28] Built under the patronage of Governor and Mrs. Lon V. Stephens, the church was intended to be "an honor to statewide Methodism". [29]

Another example of this type of construction is the M.E. Church in Kirksville, Adair County, in the northern part of the state.

Even small communities could construct Akron plan churches with touches of Richardsonian Romanesque. In 1910, the Centralia M.E. Church, South, built a new building which today is the Assembly of God Church.[30] The interior of this church is arena-shaped, with a sloping floor down to a pulpit platform

in the northwest corner of the room. Partitions section off parts of the auditorium for worship. Originally a pipe organ was immediately to the right of the pulpit area, but the organ was taken to the new Methodist church when it was constructed in the late 1960s.

Another larger example of Richardsonian Romanesque combined with the Akron plan is Nelson Memorial in Boonville. This present church is the third to occupy the site. It was built in 1915 to accommodate larger crowds and was largely the brainchild of former Governor Lon V. Stephens and his wife, Margaret Nelson Stephens, who were natives of Boonville and devout Methodists. The large west window of the auditorium features an Art Nouveaux pattern of foliage and dominates the interior of the room. The seats are semi-circular with a gently sloping floor to an altar area in front, not in one corner. Behind the altar, pulpit, and pulpit chairs, rises the massive choir loft and pipe organ, all done in solid oak and given as a memorial to Mrs. Stephens' parents, the Nelsons.[31] No partitions can be found in the present sanctuary, which was remodeled and extended eastward in 1965 to accommodate a larger congregation. It is logical to assume that partitions were present in the beginning.

The influence of the Akron plan and High Victorian architecture extended even to rural congregation which would not built a true arena/amphitheater type auditorium. Longwood

Methodist Church in Pettis County shows a church constructed during this time period. An old photograph of the Bonne Terre Methodist Church in St. Francois County reveals that the interior lacked pews but instead had chairs which could be arranged as desired to form a type of Akron plan or a conventional rectangular church arrangement. Another rural church whose exterior was semi-Akron was Mount Zion in Boone County. Built in 1909, the frame church is almost square, with rounded ends and Gothic windows. However, the interior was a regular rectangular plan with two side aisles, straight pews, and a stove on each side of the building for heat. Thus practicality combined with fashion to form this church. Unfortunately, the church has closed and is no longer Methodist. Someone is restoring the building and keeping up the grounds and attached cemetery. However, they have also taken up all the footstones from the graves and used them as the floors for both the men's and women's restrooms at the church, a most incongrous sight.

4. The Great Revival The fourth category of historic Methodist churches is the period between the First World War and the Great Depression. These churches reflected a growing awareness of European influences and a look back at the past for inspiration. Plans were expansive as church leaders confidently looked to the future growth of Methodism. This grandiose style of construction was halted by the Great Depression and World War Two. After the war, new ideas had emerged

in religious thought and patterns of architecture changed once again. Two examples illustrate the plight and difficulties in building these churches.

In 1904 the M.E. Church, South, in Columbia elected to replace their second church with a new edifice built in the familiar Richardsonian Romanesque style and designed by the firm of Matthews and Clark of St. Louis[32] Built at a cost of almost $32,000, the new church proved to be totally inadequate within 20 years as it did not have enough space to hold the students attending the three institutions of higher education in Columbia. It also proved to be a considerable distance from the University campus, which caused problems for those students. It was demolished in the late 60s or early 70s. Finally, in 1921, Bishop William Fletcher McMurry undertook to raise $400,000 to construct a new church with emphasis upon the student welfare. The estimate was to prove far too low and to haunt the church for many years. [33] Plans for the church were drawn by Dr. A.J. Baylor, head of the architectural department of the Board of Church Extension, and an heir to the ideas of Elbert M. Conover, the advocate of the return to Gothic Revival traditions. Contractor for the project was Epple Construction Company of Columbia. The church proved to be a combination of various medieval motifs, with a modern structure supporting a church faced with stone to give the appearance of monumentality Three main entrances symbolizing the Trinity open into the vast

interior of the sanctuary which has returned to a rectangular plan complete with gallery in the back and on both sides. The raised altar area at the head of the main aisle is dominated by the great Skinner organ and choir loft. All efforts were made to have the church be as medieval in effect as possible and no trace of the Akron plan can be detected. Adjacent to the sanctuary is McMurry Chapel, a smaller area than the 1,200 seat sanctuary and a memorial to Bishop McMurry whose untiring work made the church possible.

The other large church built in this type is the Paul H. Linn Memorial Methodist Church on the campus of Central Methodist College in fayette. Linn Memorial is the fourth place of worship for Methodist in Fayette. In 1884, Centenary Church, an example of High Victorian architecture, was constructed on the campus.[34] By 1920 this building, then 35 years old, was considered unsafe, and a new committee eager to build a more suitable edifice began work. In 1924, Bishop McMurry became president of the college and he immediately set out to build the new complex, which was to include not only a church, but also an education building and a Conservatory of Music. An agreement was entered into between the college and the local congregation in which the congregation would pay for the construction of the education building (to be known as the Parish House) and the college would raise the funds for the church from sources outside the community. The local congregation was

to be responsible for the maintenance of the Parish House, while the college would assume responsibility for the church proper with everybody having free access to all facilities. The arrangement worked well and was finally put in writing during the pastorate of Melville Koch, approximately 20 years after the fact.[35]

The architectural firm of Trueblood and Graf of St. Louis was employed to draw the plans for the new complex and Epple Construction Company began a long history of work on the campus by doing the actual construction. The Parish House and Swinney Conservatory of Music were finished first, with Centenary Church left in the middle. In 1928 the old church was pulled down and work begun on the present one. Stone was shipped from Bedford, Indiana, a gift of the Indiana Limestone Co.. In back of the sanctuary the Cross Memorial Tower dominates the entire campus, while in the front of the church the great Norman arch reveals a monumental entryway. The church is eclectic, with stained glass windows reminiscent of Chartres, a huge grillwork over the altar with English Tudor motifs, and an entire massive feeling of a Norman French church. Rectangular in plan, the main aisle leads directly to the raised altar platform with pulpit, altar, and pulpit chairs. Behind rises the choir loft and organ, with pipes recessed into the walls and not visible in the sanctuary. There is a gallery in the back. An entire book was written by the late Professor Gaddis

on the symbolism of the church and it is apparent that no effort was spared to make the sanctuary a place of beauty and contemplation.

The Great Depression brought to a dramatic halt the continuance of great churches built in the Gothic style. It was simply too expensive. Both Missouri Methodist and Linn Memorial were deeply in debt for years. Neither was completed on time and both had to have temporary roofs due to the financial conditions of the day. By the time prosperity and peace had returned to the country, a new generation looked to modernity for inspiration and sought flexibility in sanctuaries.

In Missouri, all four categories of historical Methodist churches remain, some in large numbers, some only in a few examples. Each show that the Methodist churches in Missouri followed national trends of their day, that practicality and pocketbook were important considerations as the churches were built, and that worship as an emotional experience was considered important. Literally hundreds of Methodist churches dot this state just waiting to be explored and examined.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Conover, Elbert, The Church Builder. New York: Interdenominational Bureau of Architecture, 1948. p. 3

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[3] Ibid., p. 64

[4] Ibid., p. 64

[5] White, James F., Protestant Worship and Church Architecture. New York: Oxford University Press, 1964. p. 8

[6] Ibid, p. 116

[7] Ibid

[8] Rose, Harold Wickliffe, The Colonial Houses of Worship in America. New York: Hastings House Publishers, 1963. p. 84

[9] Gray, Marcus L., The Centennial Volume of Missouri Methodism. Methodist Episcopal Church South. Kansas City: Burd and Fletcher Printing Co., 1906. p. 7

[10] Ibid.

[11] Interviews with Reverends Wes Arrington and Gregory K. Poole in October 1982

[12] Tucker, Frank, Old McKendree Chapel. Columbia, Mo.: Collection of Western Historical Manuscripts in Missouri East Conference Methodist Collection

[13] Andrews, Wayne, Architecture, Ambition, and Americans. New York: The Free Press, 1964. P. 129

[14] History of Boone County, Missouri. Cape Girardeau, Missouri: Ramfre Press, 1883. P. 1008

[15] Interview with Mr. Lilburn Kingsbury in June, 1980, discussing Howard County, Missouri, history. Mr. Kingsbury, age 98, is an authority on the Boonslick.

[16] Op cit., p. 1008

17 History of Howard and Cooper Counties. St. Louis: National Historical Company, 1883. p. 208

18 Rawlings, James Scott, Virginia's Colonial Churches, An Architectural Guide. Richmond: Garrett and Massie, 1963, plate 3

19 Information on back of the photograph filed in the Editorial Office of the State Historical Society of Missouri in Columbia, Missouri.

20 Information on back of the photograph filed in the Editorial Office of the State Historical Society of Missouri in Columbia, Missouri.

21 Placard on front of church.

22 Information on back of photograph in Editorial Office of the State historical Society of Missouri in Columbia, Missouri

23 Missouri Federated Women's Clubs, Sacred Stones and Stained Glass. Columbia, Missouri: Western Manuscript Historical Collection, 1981

24 Boone County History, p. 1010

25 White, p. 127

26 Lawrence, Marion, "The Akron Plan---its Genesis, History and Development", Thirty-Second Annual Report of the Board of Church Extension of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, n.p. 1914, p. 270

27 Gray, p. 118

28 Ibid, p. 507

29 Ibid

30 Cornerstone of church in Centralia, Missouri

31 Plaque on organ in Nelson Memorial Methodist Church, Boonville, Missouri

32 Stephens, Frank F., History of the Missouri Methodist Church of Columbia, Missouri. Nashville, Tenn.: Parthenon Press, 1965, p. 109

33 Ibid. p. 151

[34] Lawrence, Dr. Bertram I., A History of Paul H. Linn Memorial. n.p., 1969, p. 18

[35] Interview with the late Dr. Melville Koch, June, 1979. Material filed with National Register nomination for the church.

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Reverend Wes Arrington in October 1982

Mr. Lilburn Kingsbury in June 1979

Reverend Dr. Melville Koch in June 1979

Reverend Dr. Greg Poole in October 1982

GOLDEN CHAPEL METHODIST CHURCH
FIFTY YEARS---BEGINNING TO END

A.E. Hammond

The Boatman rural school was in north central Missouri in Medicine township. The school house afforded the community a meeting place for Sunday School, and a staggered schedule for preaching services. It was in this rustic school house that the youthful William A. Pollock made his first appearance in the area.

This well settled area, in the extreme southeast part of Mercer County, was in need of leadership and ready for a church building. Rev. Pollock, a personable and enthusiastic young Methodist minister, was the man for the job. He was to spend his life in a dozen counties in north central Missouri.

The interest in a church building spread faster than a contagious disease. Johnny Michael offered a site, and it was quickly staked off.

Interest was so intense and real that some organization was necessary. A meeting of all interested people was called. Rev. Pollock began as the temporary chairman. A permanent chairman and a board were quickly and agreeably elected. Chairmen for location, size, plan, contributions, and others were named.

On June 18, 1912, Henry and Sarah Golden completed a deed for two acres of their land for a church building. This location was more central than the Michael land and was on a crossroad.

So enthusiastic was the group, and so honorable was Henry Golden, that the shovel men had considerable shovel work done even before June 18th. Rev. Pollock had submitted the plans, and he was most helpful all through the building project regarding furniture, schedule, lighting and heating, and other details.

Farm work and weather slowed progress, but the church was closed in and roofed, and some painting done, before the dead of winter set in.

When spring came, interest was still high, but crops had to be tended. However, scarce finish carpenters were found, and all outside work was soon begun. A well was dug, and a spacious front cement porch and well curb poured. Three hitch racks were built, but not joined. One was on the north, one on the west, and one on the south side of the church---all totaling about two hundred feet.

There was also need for a wood shed, built on the north side and close to the church. Of course there had to be the outhouse. It was not marked "his" or "hers". It was of generous size, but not modern in any respect.

In early summer the name committee settled on the name

"Golden Chapel", specifically in honor of Uncle Henry and Aunt Sarah Golden and their four sons and families. Church services began, and by mid summer the crowds had doubled and redoubled under the pastorate of Rev. Pollock. Rev. Pollock and the Presiding Elder, who came from Missouri Wesleyan College at Cameron, led the dedication services for the new church building.

Golden Chapel was on the circuit with Harris, Asbury, and Colfax. Golden Chapel had services every second Sunday of the month. At first ministers came for services on Saturday night, Sunday morning, and Sunday night. Rev. William Pollock preached in these churches often.

On November 23, 1913, the first funeral service was conducted at the new Golden Chapel Church. Aaron Hammond, 64 years old, passed away after having lived in the area some thirty years. He was born in Vermont. While still a young man, he and his family settled in northern Illinois, and soon moved on to north Missouri. There he married and spent the rest of his life. Aaron Hammond was my Grandfather.

The Golden Chapel Church served many and was important to many people.

From an early day of the Golden Chapel church, the finances were the deep concern of Eugene Gibson. Mr. Gibson was a jovial, warm, and dedicated individual who felt the concern of having a minister. He believed the minister and the

Conference obligations should be paid, and he gave his time to call on the usual group of supporters. He was a strong supporter with his own money. He understood that the members were affected by the weather, the season, and the farm prices, which often caused a shortage in the church treasury.

Quite often Mr. Gibson would arm five or six men into a huddle after church services, in order to finally get enough money to balance the budget. He would say, "Men, we are about so many dollars short. I've been pretty well around, but I wonder if we can cut this about six ways and be all square again".

There were usually no abstainers. In fact, others often stepped up, not wanting to be left out.

On one occasion, one man said, "Didn't you do this act at the sale the other day, with four men? "Weren't you in on that split, too?"

After a silence, Eugene Gibson said, "Yes, we did get some from those fellows."

"And you? Doesn't this make you in on two of these splits?" asked the same man.

"Well, yes. But the cattle market was up a quarter last week. I didn't mind," said Mr. Gibson.

Tithing and pledging, or the lack of these, was a very personal and secretive business, and Mr. Gibson did not invade others' privacy. He was an understanding and private person,

but he did a lot to keep Golden Chapel going and solvent.

Uncle Henry and Aunt Sarah Golden lived close by, up a slight grade from the church. It was an annual occurrence in June to have an all church basket dinner at their house. The senior couple cleared the shady area of weeds, machines, and livestock in the grove of large trees. Brackets holding broad boards were repaired, replaced, or added each year to a line of trees, to hold the baskets and boxes of food. Each year the attendance seemed to reach a new climax, and another milestone.

Other activities and gatherings of Golden Chapel members were frequent in the summers and falls. One such occasion was a basket dinner at the Hammond farm. Years earlier Aaron Hammond had spent many weeks with horses, mules, scrapers, and many men digging a large pool---indeed, very large for that day. His livestock operation required plenty of water. He had stocked the pool with fish. This was the setting for a social gathering on that summer day.

The robust group of men and boys decided the pond should have a seine pulled through it a time or two. With little thought of the size and depth of the pool compared to a 40 foot seine, or that there was small chance of surrounding even small fish, they rolled up their pant legs and hit the water. Some men were soon chin-deep in water, while some on one end stayed in wading level. By hand to hand support, they were

able to make some progress, but the other end of the seine was powerless. A 20 foot rope seemed to be the answer, so a "near hero" vowed he could tie the rope around his waist and swim across, dragging the seine up the deep side. This all happened before many knew of the knew idea, but trouble was at hand.

Charley had tied the rope around his waist and started across. Somehow the men let loose of the other end, and Charley yanked the seine out into deep water. Had the men held firmly to their end of the seine, they could have dragged the seine, rope, and Charley across the pool to safety in a matter of seconds.

It was then that the big six and a half foot preacher, Earl Snyder, used his height and long arms to reach Charley. No one had to tell Charley to grab his hand. The knot in the rope had adjusted to Charley's back, and it was impossible for him to untie it and free himself, so he could swim to shore under his own power. Charley had not gotten a breath of water, so it all ended well and quickly. This brought an end to the fishing that day.

Probably one of the most unusual social activities ever experienced by Methodist men came to those in the Golden Chapel church. These husky and aggressive men threw, kicked, and caught the football on Sunday afternoons or any other time two or three were together. This led to an interest in having a game with the Princeton town team or the Princeton High School.

The town team answered the challenge, and the game was played on the flat west of the church, on Uncle Henry's blue-grass sod. Golden Chapel won over that team, 6-0. Then the high school boys played them on the Princeton High School field. The high school won that game, 14-0.

Unbelievably the church men wore almost no protection or football equipment. Some wore a stocking cap, or a heavy winter cap with fold-down ear flaps. Heavy blanket jackets were worn by others. Some men tacked small thick squares of leather onto work shoes to improve traction. No men were hurt but it is well the Methodist social calendar never endorsed football.

At a later date there was an active summer baseball league organized, which included Golden Chapel, and the Princeton and Harris churches. Schedules were arranged and they played double round robin. In late summer, double-headers were arranged to pick up rain outs. Church or Sunday School attendance was the only requirement for eligibility to play.

Medicine Township in Mercer County seemed to be a general center for many activities. South of Golden Chapel, in the village of Half Rock, was the Christian church, built five years later than Golden Chapel, and patterned after it. Nearby was the oldest of all, a Baptist church.

For the most part, each of these churches had preaching one Sunday a month. Sunday nights always found a full church of people, from all three churches, wherever the preaching was held.

There was a special interest in music, and the churches had full choirs. There was a popular male quartet, and sometimes a mixed quartet, made up from members of all the churches, who sang at various services in the community. Over the years membership in these quartets shifted, but seldom did all come from the same church.

There was a large family of Coopers in the countryside. It seemed that if one's name was Cooper, one could sing. A Miss Cooper enrolled in Missouri Wesleyan College in Cameron, and later married a professional musician--teacher and performer---Kenneth Crawford. This couple returned to Half Rock and gave private lessons, taught a religious singing class at Golden Chapel, gave help to the quartets from time to time, taught in local high schools, and later spent several years in Rochester, New York, schools.

During one of these Golden Chapel singing classes, there was an interruption by some outside mischief makers. The double doors were both open on this very warm evening. At an unexpected moment Mr. Crawford struck his music rack signaling the singers to stop. All was silent, then came sounds---a clank, a ping, and a thud. A half-dollar sized washer rolled

across the floor, and one lady held up a fencing staple that had fallen in her lap. A quick search produced more of the unusual ammunition.

As Mr. Crawford rolled these items in his hand, his eyes revealed intense anger. He deliberately said, "Men! We don't have to take this! Come on."

He spun on one heel and the entire choir followed. There were some laughs and snickers from the half dozen or so intruders, as they stood in line, far enough back to get some support from the darkness. Mr. Crawford and his supporters stood on the raised cement porch. Things became as quiet as a prayer meeting. Though Mr. Crawford was no giant, he was not one that anyone would expect to push around easily.

His broad shoulders and his fast and wiry movements were impressive as he said, "Did you guys come here to sing or are you looking for trouble? If it is trouble--you have found it."

No answer was offered.

Then he said, "We are here for business. It appears you guys are out just to raise some hell. What is your reason for being here? Why are you bothering and endangering harmless people?"

Finally the quietness was broken. Someone weakly said, "We didn't mean no harm."

"Well, throwing staples and iron washers out of the dark into the faces of unaware and unprotected people is dangerous

and stupid," said Mr. Crawford, "and we don't expect to take any more of it. Is that clear? Anyone who wants to challenge just step forward."

Not a sound. The only movement was the cat-like appearance of Wade Chipps out of the darkness. He was known to be effective with the boxing gloves. Crawford and the singers were the first to be aware of him. The rowdies had no idea he was behind them. Mr. Chipps in his evening shoes had pussy-footed close in and stood like a statue.

Mr. Crawford said, "Either get out of here or make your move".

At that moment Mr. Chipps ambled forward with his hands on his hips. He dropped his hands and stepped through the middle of the enemy's line. They readily made room---lots of room---for him.

Mr. Chipps said, "I was restin' on my front porch and I've heard this from the start---you darin' each other. So I made my way down here. I doubt if Mr. Crawford needs any help, but if he does, I guess we can squelch it pretty quick. Or if he wants to get the sheriff in on this, I'll help him there. I can name all you boys."

When there was no answer, Mr. Chipps said, "Maybe just now you ought to apologize to Mr. Crawford and these people, and make it lastin'." The gang broke up then and there.

In the summer of 1923, Rev. Pollock set August for a tent

meeting to be held in the town of Harris. He particularly wanted to include the churches he had often served. He had helped establish the circuit of Asbury, Colfax, Harris, and Golden Chapel Methodist churches. He was born one county north, in Pollock, Mo., and knew many families up and down the Milwaukee railroad.

This was to be a special revival. So he invited the Rev. Todd, a wonderful, warm, and dedicated man who was serving the big Christian church at Princeton to include his congregation. Rev. Flute Walker, a capable and most sincere fellow, was also asked to have a part in the meeting. He was serving the Harris Baptist church.

The plans were well laid, and Van Purdy, from the Colfax church, furnished a newly designed Delco system for lighting the entire lot and tent, with special lighting over the choir loft. The lighting system that served the small town of Harris could not easily be arranged to handle the extra load.

The visiting ministers each delivered sermons, and the crowds increased regularly for three weeks. It was a wonderful tent meeting, with many converts.

Plans were completed for the baptismal services on the fourth Sunday afternoon, at the O. Harris and Sons large farm pool. Cattle pastures and gates were arranged to accommodate a large crowd. The Harris family was happy to be a part of this community service.

The shoreline of the pool was divided into three denominational areas, with each minister allotted a section for himself and his lay persons and new members. It took several minutes to unload cars and get people properly located. A choir was located near the center of the group.

The baptismal service began with a song and a prayer. The choir sang softly and beautifully the same songs, while each denomination baptized its new members.

My early life in this rural community, and a complete course at William Jewell College, never outlined for me the distinct religious lines so precisely defined by some groups. The unusual cooperative attitude of the churches of this community was exceptional and commendable.

Rev. Greene brought his family to our charge in the late twenties. He served the churches well and was there three years. His immediate family, early teen-agers, three sons and one daughter, brought interest and help to young members. His twin sons and daughter gave some special musical numbers. The Greenes helped organize the Epworth League. (It was the daughter, Hope Greene, who introduced me to my future wife at a Methodist evening youth meeting in Maryville, Missouri.)

One son, Franklin Greene, supplied the Harris Circuit while he was attending Kirksville State College. Later he returned to Golden Chapel for a two-week revival. It was a happy experience to have Franklin serve the same church as his

father had, fifteen years before. Dr. Franklin Greene went on to serve large congregations in the Arizona Conference.

Rev. Greene and Rev. Pollock conducted my Mother's funeral at Golden Chapel in 1927.

The drought and economic slump of the thirties were hard on rural churches. Rural people experienced very low incomes, and chose to lessen their church giving. At times, no minister was assigned, and if they were, often did not get their small salaries in full.

In 1935 the Harris Methodist church burned, and caused a gap in the original circuit.

Besides the war, the forties brought differences, splits, and troubles into the Golden Chapel Church. However, membership did increase and leadership shifted.

There was interest in getting a pipe organ. The first one was a gift, a hand-pumped organ, which turned out to be unsatisfactory. Then another, better, organ--an electric one---was brought to the church. By this time electricity was being used. Without sanction or authority, the minister and two or three supporters contracted for this one. Sadly, this was not the first or last time, a minister, board members, or individuals operated "solo".

Unfortunately, this electric pipe organ was never functional, which made it very difficult to collect for. This minister was thereafter known as the Organ Man. This sad

situation caused some members to stay away for a time.

A gift of some books from the Princeton Methodist Church was another point of contention. Free used books were rejected. Some thought "Beggars should not have been choosers."

In 1945, and again in 1946, Daily Vacation Bible School was conducted by two mothers, with some part-time help. By then the minister was residing in Princeton, and distance limited his time for Golden Chapel.

The last funeral held in Golden Chapel was on February 17, 1949, for Jody Michael, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joe Michael. Rev. Flute Walker conducted the funeral, and burial was in the Harris Cemetery. It took a community effort to make the church clean and acceptable for a funeral. With no services having been conducted there the previous few months, the raccoons had moved in, in excessive and unbelievable numbers. Besides the filth, there were piles of bones and extensive furniture and facings destruction.

In the early spring of 1962, proper steps were taken for the demolition of the Golden Chapel building. Harry Campbell of Princeton paid a small sum and was obliged to take it down and rid the area of all effects. When he was beginning this work, the belfry bell was lowered and carried away by some unknown pair---no one man could have done the job alone. Did a stolen church bell rest easy on a man's conscience?

Mr. Campbell spent the summer methodically taking down the building, pulling the nails, and hauling the salvaged lumber away. In 1963, he built his house in Princeton from this top quality lumber from the Golden Chapel church.

In reality Golden Chapel served for a round fifty years ---though the last ten years were in stress. Many people served and were proud to be a part of Golden Chapel Church. Especially during the first twenty-five years, there was a very closely woven, enthusiastic, devoted membership. Loyalty was a quality always found in the Golden Chapel Church.

There were some stalwart families here in 1912, and some of their heirs are still on the nearby farmsteads today. Farms have doubled and redoubled in size in fifty years, thus only one in four houses remains. Families in 191 were large-- today the fewer households will average less than one child per family. Rural population per square mile is very low, and many of them are senior citizens. This trend has had a lot to do with the closing of the Golden Chapel church and many other rural churches as well.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Mary Nickols Wyatt was most helpful with her memory and records. Through the years, Mary was church secretary, treasurer, janitor, and teacher.

Louise Michael worked with children and started the Vacation Bible School.

Kathy Hammond shared some old files kept by her parents, the Stantrufs. Lois Hammond had other records.

Cody Chipps, 82 years old, was the oldest member available, and his very sharp mind was able to list the football players. He also could name most of the people in a big Dedication Day picture.

Wendell Chipps, Lois Golden, and Mrs. Fred Schierbaum, descendants of Henry and Sarah Golden, were also most helpful.